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AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

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TO: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman  
Supervisor Gloria Molina  
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke  
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley  
Auditor-Controller 

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – HATHAWAY  
CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES GROUP HOME**

We have completed a review of Hathaway Group Home (Group Home or Agency) operated by Hathaway Children and Family Services, Inc. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Hathaway Group Home is a 98-bed facility, which provides care for boys and girls ages 5-18 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Hathaway Group Home was providing services for 64 Los Angeles County DCFS children, 19 Probation children, and one Ventura County Probation child. Hathaway Group Home is located in the Third District.

**Scope of Review**

The purpose of the review was to determine whether the Agency was providing the services outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covered basic child safety and licensing issues, and included an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, facility inspections, and interviews with eight children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with the residents were designed to obtain their perspective on the program services provided by the Agency, and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"*

### **Summary of Findings**

Generally, the Agency was providing the services outlined in their Program Statement. However, the Agency needs to develop Needs and Services Plans that have specific, measurable, attainable, and realistic goals; develop comprehensive quarterly reports that focus on the actual goals of the Needs and Services Plans; and obtain court authorization for prescribed sleep medications.

Attached is a detailed report of the review findings.

### **Review of Report**

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. The Agency's management is required to provide a corrective action plan to the Children's Group Home Ombudsman within 15 business days from the receipt of this report. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me or have your staff contact DeWitt Roberts at (626) 293-1101.

JTM:DR:CC:bg

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer  
David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS  
Richard Shumsky, Chief Probation Officer  
James H. Cheney, Executive Director, Hathaway Children and Family Services  
Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer  
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**Hathaway Group Home  
8955 West Gold Creek Road  
Sylmar, Ca 91392  
Phone: (818) 896-2474  
License No.: 191201835  
Rate Classification Level: 12**

## **I. Facility and Environment**

*(Facility Based - No Sample)*

**Method of assessment – Observation and resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews: Eight**

### **Comments:**

The Hathaway Group Home (Group Home or Agency) is a large facility located in an isolated, hilltop community. The Group Home is clean, spacious, and comfortable. The Group Home is well maintained and nicely landscaped. There were no observable safety hazards.

The interiors of the various cottages are generally neat and clean. The décor provides a home-like atmosphere. The common rooms are nicely decorated and well maintained. The resident bedrooms are spacious, comfortable, and personalized to each child's desire with posters, pictures, and knick-knacks.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a VCR. There are books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs.

There is a sufficient supply of frozen food, meat, canned goods, bakery items, and fresh fruit. The food is accessible, appropriately dated, and properly stored.

### **Recommendations**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

## **II. Program Services**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews: Eight**

**Comments:**

The residents meet the Agency's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Residents received a complete initial diagnostic assessment after being admitted into the Agency's program.

Although the Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) are current, they do not consistently cite specific, measurable, attainable, and realistic goals. As a result, the quarterly reports, which are required to focus on the residents' NSP goals, were also insufficient.

There was documentation to support the placement workers' participation in the development and update of the NSPs.

The residents are provided with psychological testing, and emotional and developmental counseling as required by the Program Statement. Residents receive regular individual and group therapy.

**Recommendations****1. Hathaway Group Home management develop:**

- a. Needs and Services Plans that have specific, measurable, attainable, and realistic goals.
- b. Comprehensive quarterly reports that focus on the goals of the Needs and Services Plans.

**III. Educational and Emancipation Services****Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews****Sample size for resident interviews: Eight****Comments:**

Six of the residents attend non-public school. One resident is dually enrolled attending both a non-public and public high school. One resident attends a public elementary school. There is a current Individualized Education Plan for each resident. The records contain current semester report cards and/or progress reports for the residents. Residents reported that they are provided with daily educational stimulation away from school and that the Group Home is supportive of their academic progress.

The Agency's program includes the development of daily living skills. The residents manage self-care, living unit routines, and laundry. Residents are involved in the planning and preparation phase of meals.

Residents are offered the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Residents have the opportunity to work and manage their own money.

### **Recommendations**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

## **IV. Recreation and Activities**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews: Eight**

### **Comments:**

The Agency provides its residents opportunities to participate in recreational activities. The residents expressed satisfaction with the recreational activities and stated that the recreation schedules are followed.

The Group Home utilizes the many on-grounds recreational facilities and community organizations for recreation and program resources. The residents reported that they participate in planning some of the activities. The residents have free time and are able to participate in self-selected activities.

Transportation is provided to and from off-grounds activities.

### **Recommendations**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

## **V. Psychotropic Medication**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents for sixty-six case files**

### **Comments:**

There are current court authorizations for all routine prescribed psychotropic medication. However, no court authorizations existed for three residents who are also

prescribed sleep medication on an as needed basis. Documentation confirms that the prescribing psychiatrist routinely sees the children.

Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

### **Recommendation**

- 2. Hathaway Group Home management obtain court authorizations for prescribed sleep medications.**

## **VI. Personal Rights**

### **Method of assessment – Resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews: Eight**

### **Comments:**

Residents expressed satisfaction with the Agency and its staff. Residents participate in an initial orientation and are aware of the Group Home's policies and procedures. Residents reported that they feel safe in the Group Home and there is no interference with their daily living functions.

Residents reported satisfaction with the taste of the food and with their ability to participate in menu development. They reported that there is sufficient staff supervision and expressed satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with most staff. Residents feel there is at least one staff member they can easily talk to and trust.

Residents reported that they are assigned chores to complete on a daily basis that are reasonable and not too demanding. Residents are able to have visitors and make and receive personal telephone calls. They are permitted to contact their probation officers, social workers, attorneys, and family members as needed. Residents are able to attend weekly religious services of their choice and feel that the Agency is respectful of their cultural lifestyles. The Agency allows the residents to celebrate holidays.

Residents reported that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Residents are aware of their right to refuse medication.

### **Recommendation**

**There are no recommendations for the section.**

## **VII. Clothing and Allowance**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews**

**Sample size for resident interviews: Eight**

### **Comments:**

The Agency provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and allowances to the residents. The Group Home supplies its residents with the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance and the residents are given the opportunity to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to residents is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Agency provides residents with the required minimum base allowance, which they are able to increase according to the Agency's behavioral system. Residents are permitted to spend their allowances as they choose.

The Agency provides residents with adequate personal care items and adequate storage.

Residents are provided with an opportunity to maintain photo albums/life books.

### **Recommendations**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**